

ence of material energies. If we place any trust in our self-conscious powers of observation and analysis, we must arrive at the conclusion that spontaneity or free will guided by consciousness is not only a vital force, but that it is the highest and most wonderful of the vital forces that are manifest to us : it lies at the extremest limit of the territory which Life has won in its struggle with the Matter that fetters it; and in its capricious irregularity it presents the strongest contrast to the uniform, calculable energies that are displayed by Matter when unallied with Life. Practically of course, we know very well that human nature introduces an unpredictable element into our experiences.

And if the majority of men are content to regulate their lives by the suggestions of others, or by habit, and make no original use of their wills except to decide trifling questions of everyday routine, those who aspire to lead their fellows are generally characterized by strong will-power, which is, indeed, often their only title to ascendancy. So also with the men who have led human progress by their inventions, whether in forms of art, or in standards of conduct, or in material contrivances. Free will is distinct from the inventive impulse : it is a disposition towards choice, not a motive towards construction. But it is obvious that an inventor must use it very largely in selecting and combining the ideas that

occur to him. Man owes his moral and material advancement, as well as his social organization, to the exceptional powers of volition enjoyed by some of his kind. He has risen above the brutes, little by little, through the inventive spontaneity of a few of his species, to whom it has occurred to suggest changes of idea or of habit. Some of these have been adopted through